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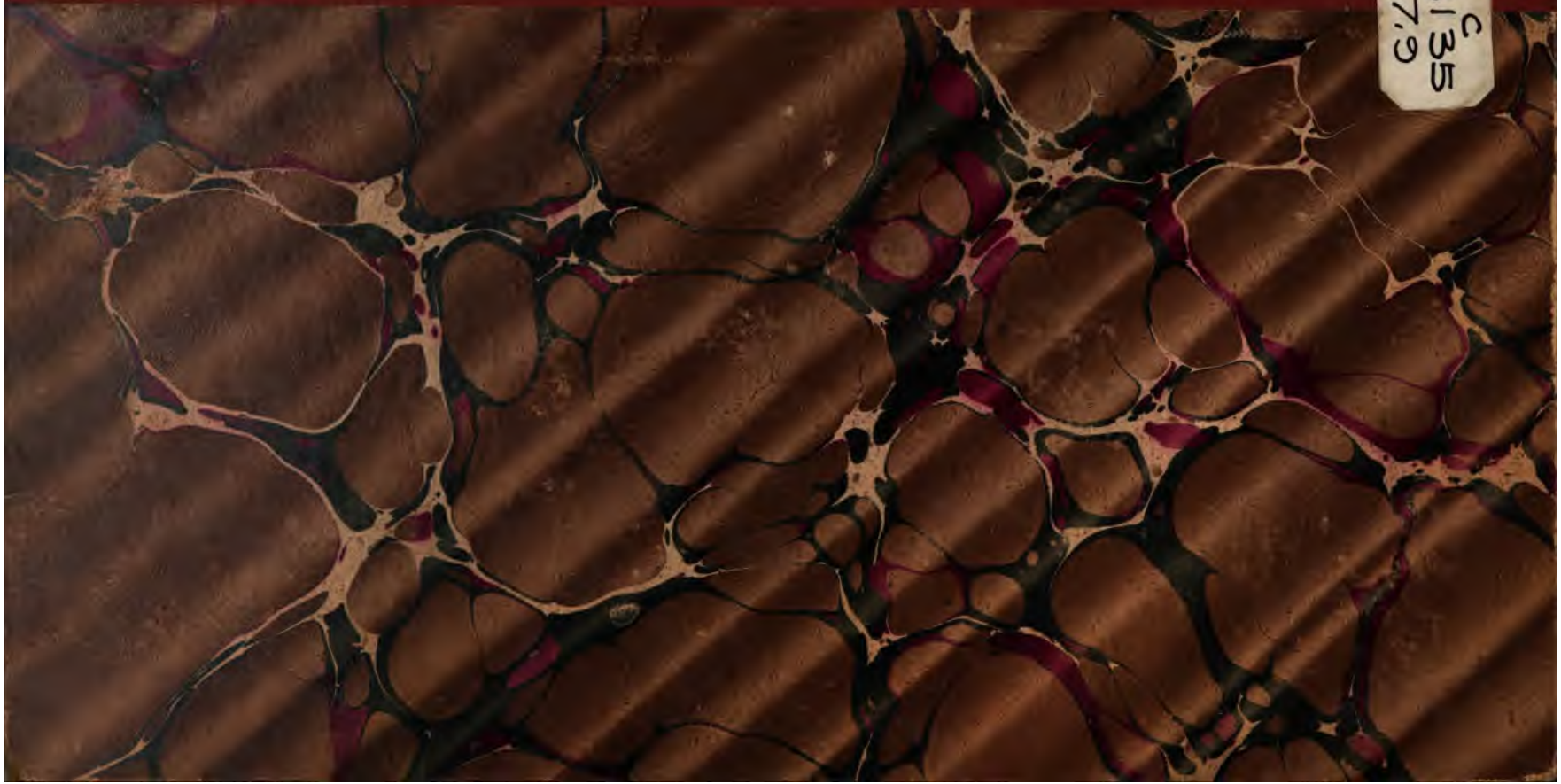

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MINISTERS' AND WIDOWS' CHARITABLE FUND.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE

NINETIETH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GENERAL ASSOCIATION

OF THE

CONGREGATIONAL AND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCHES OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

HELD AT

MANCHESTER, OCTOBER 10, 11, AND 12, 1899,

BY

REV. F. D. AYER, D. D., PASTOR EMERITUS,

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, CONCORD, N. H.

PUBLISHED BY THE TRUSTEES.

CONCORD, N. H.:
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GREETING.

It is a source of especial satisfaction that we are able to place in the hands of the Congregational ministers of New Hampshire, Dr. Ayer's admirable paper. He has made it possible for us to put in permanent form information of great importance, not only to the beneficiaries of the fund, but to the churches and active ministry of the state.

In this booklet will be found the constitution and other facts, which, together with Dr. Ayer's address, make a strong appeal to sympathetic people, and we hope it will be preserved for future reference. The need of the beneficiaries is so great, and the usefulness of the fund so manifest that they make their own appeal. The trustees will be satisfied if you will receive the facts as presented, having no fear but that the result will be that every Congregational church in the state, according to the measure of its ability, will wish to have a part in relieving the necessities of helpless workers, who, in their generation, have served men "by the will of God."

CHARLES T. PAGE, *President.*
WILLIAM P. FISKE, *Secretary.*

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HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE MINISTERS' AND WIDOWS' CHARITABLE FUND.

The officers of the Ministers' and Widows' Charitable Fund, in their desire to increase the interest in the society, have thought it wise to present to the General Association a sketch of its history, and some facts in regard to the administration of the fund.

It is at their request that I have gathered some of the facts of the organization and history of the society, and added to them some considerations that appeal for increased gifts to its treasury.

The support of the ministry has been a vital question for the church from its earliest days. Ministers have constantly been worn out by their services, and many, becoming dependent, have by their sufferings appealed to the consideration of the people.

In the colony of Connecticut in October, 1748, the General Assembly voted to aid a needy minister, and again in 1772, repeated the act. In 1813, an "Annuity Society" was organized in that state, to aid ministers. As early as 1786, in Massachusetts a society was instituted, having for its object, in part, to meet the wants of the destitute families of deceased clergymen, called "The Massachusetts Congregational Charitable Society." It still continues. "The Massachusetts Convention of Congregational Ministers" has quite a fund and continues to gather for an annual sermon.

It is worthy of note in the history of the Congregational churches of New Hampshire that the early years of this century gave birth to so many benevolent societies which have survived the generation that inaugurated them, and

become national in their adoption. The Home Missionary Society in 1801, The Female Cent Society in 1804, The Bible Society in 1811, and the Widows' Charitable Fund in 1813.

The men of that day saw clearly the need, and were wise to adopt means fitted to meet it. This state is thus definitely identified with the great national benevolent organizations of the denomination, most of which it antedated by its own state societies.

One cannot read the names of the pastors of that day without being reminded of the fact, that these were stalwart men in the ministry of our churches. It is well for us to remember them: Reverend Messrs. McFarland, Putnam, Church, Bradford, Lord, Woods, Burnham, French, Harris, Parker, Rowland, Webster, Sutherland, Shurtleff, Patrick, and Payson.

The next tier also: Reverend Messrs. Bouton, Barstow, Richards, Wallace, Savage, Curtis, Young, Toby, Davis, and Day.

The roll of the General Association bears these names and others from year to year, and at the meetings they discussed vital questions, kept their hands on the spiritual pulse of the churches, watched the ministry, the education of young men entering it, the roll of the unemployed ministers, the character of the men coming to the state, and they kept themselves in vital relations to the neighboring states by receiving and sending delegates.

Such ministers raised up, and kept active, sterling laymen and noble women not a few, who gave character to our churches; they served their generation, and left a priceless and growing legacy of work begun, to us who came after them.

Such permanent results from transient ministries, such abiding forces that remain after the generation that harnessed them has passed away, such cumulative activities that are born of ordinary fidelities in daily life and so strangely splice the generations, are too often forgotten in the estimate of human

life, and especially in the verdict as we look for the influence of a "permanent and learned ministry," and its claim upon the churches.

The first suggestion of the Widows' Charitable Fund was perfectly natural. It arose from a single case that touched the hearts of those present, but that case was one of a multitude and an illustration of what was to be in years to come. A few people were present at the funeral of Rev. Ebenezer Flint, at Brentwood, in 1811, and touched by the condition of the family, a widow and four young children, Rev. Jonathan French suggested the duty of providing relief for indigent widows of ministers. Rev. John H. Church proposed the subject to the General Association, at the meeting in 1812, and a committee was appointed to devise measures for the establishment of such a fund.

At the meeting of the Association in Plymouth, September 21, 1813, the record says: "The committee appointed last year to devise measures for establishing a fund for the relief of the widows and children of deceased ministers of the gospel, who may need charitable assistance, reported the following plan, which was adopted:

PLAN FOR ESTABLISHING THE WIDOWS' CHARITABLE FUND.

"WHEREAS, Ministers of the Gospel do not always, at their decease, leave their families the means of a decent support;

"*Therefore*, the following plan is adopted for the establishing of a fund for the relief of the widows and children of deceased ministers who may need charitable aid.

1. "There shall be a board of twelve trustees, who shall, in the first instance, be chosen by this General Association, and shall be called the trustees of the Widows' Charitable Fund. Not less than seven, nor more than nine, of said trustees shall be ordained ministers of the gospel, and seven shall constitute a quorum.

2. "The said trustees shall annually elect, from their own body, a president, secretary, treasurer, and prudential com-

mittee, who shall continue in office till others are chosen. They shall also elect two persons to be auditors of the treasurer's accounts." Then the duty of the officers is defined.

The third article specifies the time and place of meeting and the business to be transacted. Vacancies are provided for in Article 4, and the methods of collecting money are stated in the fifth.

The sixth article, in regard to applications for charitable aid is as follows: "All applications for charitable aid from the fund aforesaid, shall be made by the widow or children of a deceased minister, or by their agent or guardian, to the prudential committee, or else such application shall be referred to said committee, who shall examine into the circumstances of the case and report the result of their inquiries and their opinion to the board. The board may determine how far the prudential committee shall answer the request of applicants in the intervals of the meetings of the board.

7. "This constitution may be amended by concurrence of the board and of this General Association."

A board of trustees was chosen, and the first meeting appointed to be held on election day, at 10 o'clock, at Concord. The trustees met at Doctor McFarland's study June 1, 1814. The choice of officers resulted as follows:

President—Rev. William Morrison.
Secretary—Deacon Amos Tappan.
Treasurer—Dr. Thomas Sargent.
Prudential Committee. — Rev. Walter Harris, Rev. Nathan Parker, Rev. John Smith.
Auditors—John True, Esq., Rev. Asa McFarland.

A committee was appointed to submit the business of this board to the convention and to report to this board some plan for raising the fund.

The convention to which allusion is made was the convention of Congregational and Presbyterian ministers, which was held annually in Concord on election week, and a sermon was delivered before it. That sermon, it was voted, should

also be considered the annual sermon before this board. This convention met till about 1856.

The next day, June 2, the committee reported, advising, "That a constitution be adopted at this session, and that hereafter there be an annual public contribution for this object, taken after the sermon delivered before the convention, also after the sermon delivered before the General Association.

2. "That each Presbyterian and Congregational minister in the state should pay at least one dollar annually and solicit donations from others.

3. "That a circular letter should be sent to the ministers requesting that there be one contribution annually in each church."

It was voted to hold the meetings on the first Wednesday in June, in connection with the convention.

The next year, 1815, the treasurer reported as holding $221.98.

It was decided at this meeting that the money raised by contribution or subscription and all donations, unless otherwise ordered by the donors, should be considered as a permanent fund, and that one per cent. of the interest shall be annually added to the principal. The remaining interest, the annuities of the ministers, and the collections at the meetings of the convention and General Association may be expended annually.

This year a vote was passed to petition the legislature for an act of incorporation, and that the secretary report annually to the secretary of the convention and of the General Association.

At the meeting in 1816, the treasurer was authorized to make appropriations not exceeding forty dollars. He reported $264.80 in the treasury.

(In 1817, the president, Rev. William Morrison, resigned, and Rev. William F. Rowland was chosen to the office.)

The act of incorporation was passed by the legislature, and approved by Gov. G. T. Gilman, June 23, 1815. It authorized the society to hold real and personal estate to the amount of $4,000, free of taxation forever.

Several times during the coming years there was not a quorum present at the annual meeting in Concord, and there the trustees adjourned to meet in the fall at the time and place of the meeting of the General Association. The convention collection in 1818 amounted to $37.01, and that of the General Association in 1819 amounted to $23.82.

It was voted in 1825, that any trustee removing from the state should be no longer on the board.

The constitution was changed at different times as seemed to be expedient, and the society was kept in good working condition. The appropriations were usually $20.00, and the donations about $120.00.

In 1845, the appropriations were made $25.00, and there were five beneficiaries.

The trustees made frequent appeals to the churches, in their efforts to increase the funds, to which the response was never large, yet never fully forgotten.

There were numerous cases of destitution from year to year, among the disabled ministers. There was no organized help for them. At the meeting of the General Association in Newport, in 1865, this subject was discussed and it was voted to apply to the legislature for a change of the charter so as to enable this society to give relief to indigent and disabled clergymen. The charter was so amended by the legislature at the session of 1866, and at a special meeting of the trustees held July 11, 1866, by a unanimous vote the amendments were accepted and adopted.

The constitution was so amended as to be in accord with the new charter, permitting appropriations to needy clergymen, and to hold property to the amount of $30,000.

The suggestion was made that on the first Sunday of January each year, a collection be taken in all our churches for the benefit of this treasury, and a resolution was passed, asking the General Association at its next meeting to advise the churches to adopt the plan.

The churches that had been in the habit of contributing to this cause very generally adopted the suggestion, and some

other churches added their gifts quite regularly. From that day to this, the first Sunday of January has been the day for this collection, and it would be a great help to this noble charity if each church in the state would, on that day, strengthen it by prayer and gift.

From the very beginning it will be noticed, this society has been in closest relation with, and obedient to, the will of the General Association. By the new constitution, two of the trustees are elected by the Association.

The first meeting of the society under the new charter and constitution was held at Concord, April 23, 1867. At this meeting the persons then in office were elected to the respective offices under this constitution, so that really the only change was in the broader function to the society.

In order that the work might be the better understood and its funds be increased, it was decided to employ an agent. Rev. John K. Young, D. D., was engaged; he entered upon the work May 1, and continued in it for more than a year, presenting the subject in the churches, sending out circulars, and seeking to quicken the interest of ministers and people in this cause. Dr. Young also gave limited service to this work after he accepted the supply of the church at Hopkinton. Until this time there had been no expense incurred in the administration of the fund. In 1868, it was voted to pay the expenses of the secretary and treasurer for stationery and postage.

The applications for aid now increased. The appropriations were $25, and the amount given annually from $200 to $250.

The donations in 1873 were larger than ever before, and new interest was manifested. A plan to make "Memorial Members" by the payment of ten dollars, to be added to the permanent fund, was adopted. The plan was proposed by Mrs. Asa McFarland and Mrs. B. P. Stone, and a vote of thanks to them was passed, for their proposal and the efforts by which they had raised $210, having secured twenty-one Memorial Members. This money was passed to the

treasurer. Mrs. McFarland was requested to receive the names of all who may be constituted such members.

This year an appropriation of $69 was made for the first time.

In 1876, the regular appropriations were raised to $30 for widows and $80 for ministers.

Rev. Nathaniel Bouton, D. D., was chosen president of the Widows' Charitable Fund in 1829, and held the office till the change in 1867. He was then chosen to the same office in the Ministers' and Widows' Charitable Fund, which he resigned June 5, 1878, the day before he died.

This fund owes more to Doctor Bouton than to any other for the care, fidelity, and time which he gave to it as president for a period of forty-nine years.

The meetings were usually held in his study, and he never forgot to plead in its behalf when opportunity was presented.

For many years there is great sameness in the record. The society met, kept in working order, made the regular appropriations, and met every case of want that came to it. When we remember that every appropriation given was the relief of many wants, and helped to make more comfortable some one who else had suffered after faithful toil, we can well excuse the monotony of the record, and be grateful for the unwritten history of the years.

Such is life, really made of the steady and continuous doing of deeds with a kind of monotony to one looking on or reading the record, but leaving by the transient deeds abiding results.

The trustees have always made the appropriations as large as the funds would allow, and it has ever been their one regret that they could not more generously respond to the call of the deserving applicants.

They have advanced from time to time the amount given to the beneficiaries, and in 1892 increased the appropriations to $90 to widows and $100 to ministers, sometimes adding an extra gift for exceptional cases. The appropriations in 1892 amounted to $1,560.

With the increase of funds by legacies, it became necessary for the treasurer to hold more property than the $30,000 permitted by the charter. The legislature was, therefore, again asked to amend the charter, which it did, giving the society the right to hold property to the amount of $100,000. This amended charter was recorded in 1893.

Many legacies were also received that year.

For many years the interests of the society have been presented at the sessions of the General Association, the half-hour before the meeting of the Missionary Society, on Wednesday evening. Recently the officers have secured more time in which to present the report and needs of the society, and good results have followed.

How the churches have responded to this call in behalf of the needy for more than two generations will appear by a glance at the treasury reports.

At first a part of the funds was raised by an annual contribution of one dollar from the ministers. To this many responded and during the whole time of the Widows' Fund, from 1813 to 1867, perhaps the average would be twenty ministers. In 1830, thirty-seven ministers responded. It is noticeable that usually the same ones contributed each year, and that in the earlier years and the longer pastorates some names appear till death closed the record. In the change of pastorates this plan has gradually been given up as a separate method of raising money.

For many years, also, several of the ministerial associations sent contributions to the treasury. The Piscataqua Association was especially faithful.

Only a small part of the churches have contributed regularly. Here, too, it is largely the same ones that give from year to year. There are a few churches that have kept their gifts in line nearly every year from the organization. They have stood by this and the other benevolencies of our denomination.

It deserves mention that the church at Dartmouth College has been among the most constant in its donations. The names Exeter, Durham, Portsmouth, Greenland, Chester,

Derry, Nashua, Concord, Webster, Henniker, Dover, Keene, and others are familiar to the treasurer.

More churches are now giving, and last year forty-seven sent contributions. This out of the one hundred and ninety-two churches is far too small a number. In Connecticut one hundred and fifty-nine of three hundred and twenty-three gave to this object.

From 1867, the donations were equally divided for the benefit of the widows and the ministers, unless it was otherwise ordered by the donors.

The collections at the meetings of the convention while it continued to meet, and those of the General Association, have been regular and greatly helpful. The treasurer reported in 1816, $264.80 in the treasury. The appropriations from 1815–25 were about $100 annually; from 1825–35, about $120; from 1835–45, about $140; from 1845–65, about $150.

In 1840, the fund amounted to nearly $1,000. Since 1865 the receipts and the appropriations have steadily increased.

The amount given to each beneficiary before 1867 did not usually exceed $25, and the average number of beneficiaries was about eight.

Among the first legacies to be received was one of $100 in 1840. Over $10,000 were received by legacies during 1891. From the estate of Rev. William Clarke, D. D., $2,500, and $7,500 from that of Justin S. Ambrose. The next year $5,000 came from the estate of Rev. William R. Jewett.

These legacies are significant. Dr. Clark, as secretary of the Missionary Society, knew intimately the ministers and their homes throughout the state. He had gathered his own money by care and economy, and he would not have given it carelessly or to the unworthy. He made this bequest because he knew the necessities to which it would minister. The same is true of Mr. Jewett. He had been a trustee, a secretary, and then a president of the society. He had read the letters that came in response to the gifts from the beneficiaries, and he knew how they needed and appreciated the aid given to them.

The name of Justin S. Ambrose should be held in grateful remembrance in New Hampshire. Going from us years ago like so many other sons from our homes, he was prospered in business, and in the distribution of his wealth he remembered generously the benevolent societies of our denomination. He specified a goodly sum in his will, and then made the different objects residuary legatees, so that this treasury received from his estate, $10,190.52.

Many others have given legacies, and each year adds to the funds. The fund in 1895 amounted to $45,314.98. It now amounts to $49,370.08. This fund should not halt till it reaches $100,000.

There are at present seventeen beneficiaries, and they were paid last year $1,735. This year every widow under seventy gets $135, over seventy $150, ministers $175 to $200.

All the officers have given their services, except that, as the fund has grown and the labor and risk of caring for it increased, the treasurer has been paid annually $50 from 1886–92, and since 1892, $100.

The officers have held and administered the trust with great wisdom, and the churches are under lasting obligation to the faithful men who have given so much time and care to make the money do the utmost good. They have given more than money to the beneficiaries and the correspondence, expressive of sympathy and encouragement on one side and of gratitude on the other, has given an unwritten history to these years.

That the beneficiaries have been most worthy is beyond a question. Many of them have waited till the burden was crushing before they asked aid and some needed to be sought after before they accepted it. They have not idled away life, nor have they been wasteful, but they have been men and women worn out by hard service for the churches or disabled by sickness, so that the aid has been more truly the payment of a debt than a gift of charity.

Many of the widows have struggled heroically to keep the family together and educate the children as the father had anticipated doing, and they, and the older ones, have expressed all that grateful hearts could utter.

To review the history of this society suggests that it was wisely organized. There was need of it. But the necessity for this fund is as great to-day as ever. It is not outgrown. Men grow old; men die; patient women, worn and desolate, struggle still. If the fathers were justified in starting the fund, we are as wise to perpetuate it, and under pressing obligations of wisdom and opportunity to increase it.

It touches an obligation and opens an opportunity of ministering to Christ, by caring for His servants, that is too little regarded. It is at a disadvantage beside the other objects to which we give, because often the pastor hesitates to present it to his people lest some one suspect that he may be begging for himself, or be complaining about his own small salary. The churches therefore forget the work. There are also personal cases of want near a pastor, and yet he delays to present them to his people out of regard to the sensitive feelings of the needy.

The question is sometimes asked, "Why help disabled ministers and widows by a fund and not other needy ones?" Because from their condition and relation to the churches they have special claims upon them, not so much of charity as of debt. The churches ordinarily are not willing to pay the pastor a fair salary for the work demanded. They require the best years of his life, just the middle section, and they ought to give him enough to enable him to lay up sufficient means for his maintenance in old age, or else to provide for him in case of necessity. The reason "that ministers do not *always* leave their families the means of a decent support," is not difficult to find. Negatively, it is not that they have been idle, extravagant, improvident, or lacking in financial ability.

Many a salary is fixed on the idea of getting the minister at the lowest possible figure, and that to drive a sharp bargain, even to taking advantage of his circumstances, is a shrewd business transaction. The average salary leaves no margin, even with the greatest economy, after the support and education of the family.

The churches require their minister to live in a decent condition, and of necessity he has expenses that the ordinary family has not.

A salary of $600 for support, education of children, calls of benevolence, books, emergencies of sickness, and idle months in change of pastorates, requires very good financiering to make the ends meet. Perhaps it requires as good financial ability thus to support a family on $600 a year as it does to support one on $6,000. Ministers pay their debts, one hundred cents on the dollar, and they send out from their homes sons and daughters as well educated and equipped as those that go from homes in which much more is spent.

Whether or not ministers have financial ability, I am sure that most ministers' wives have it, and she who has for two score years served a pastor and his family, sent out her sons and daughters to bless the world, been an untiring ministering angel in the parishes that have had her life, deserves all that may be needed to make her declining years comfortable. If such a woman does not know how to handle money and get large results out of it, will some man who is trying to organize a million dollar trust, or sell mining stocks, please stop long enough to tell her how to do it.

In our estimate of the minister's salary we forget, too, how often there is loss in the change of pastorates, in the being without any salary for months or a year, and the burdens of increased expenditure added.

To take the testimony of men not in the ministry, who have examined into the work and ways of men, they say that the ministry does more work, gives more to the world, and receives less pay than any other class. Says one, "clerical brains are the cheapest commodity in the market. Wear out the brain and lay the body up for repairs."

So long then as the exacting duties of the pastorate or the edict of the churches retires ministers at an early age, and leaves them to drift for years without employment; so long as the worn-out or laid aside by age or sickness, make their

mute appeal to the churches for which they have given their lives, so long will this cause challenge the consideration and demand the willing offerings of our Zion. The public thought and endeavor of the civilized world is now turned to the duty of putting those who have earned rest and ease by a life of industry, but who have been unfortunate, beyond the necessity of soliciting aid or accepting state care as paupers.

The country pensions veteran soldiers with pride. The Pennsylvania Railroad proposes to spend $325,000 annually in pensions to her aged employees. Rev. E. E. Hale, D. D., says that, "In a score of years all men sixty-five years of age probably will be pensioned." All the great denominations, Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, are pushing up to larger plans and more generous provision for the disabled clergy and their families. There is no difference of judgment there.

The workman is more than his work. God has had plenty of work for ordinary men to do, men of average ability but supreme devotion, who have been willing to work unknown, unpraised, in small places and for small salaries, and when, from no fault of theirs, they grow silent, and in the afterglow of life wait for the Sunday morning of glory to break upon their vision, He commits *them*, sometimes homeless and dependent, with a strange pathos to the keeping of His people for a little season, reminding them that they are still *His* and not their own.

I appeal then confidently to you, in behalf of the faithful pastors and their widows, who have gone up and down our hills and valleys on errands for Christ, and who are now loaned to us for keeping for a season.

When we consider the immense wealth now actually in the hands of the members of the church, is it not lamentable that any servant of Christ should be left by those whom he has blessed, without the comforts that help to make age restful, and memory a joy. Surely he should have no pang by the desertion of the ungrateful to disturb him.

Think, too, of what we are doing for the young. Everything possible to prepare them for the future, bequeathing last year $25,000,000 to educational institutions. All well, right, the old rejoice in it. But are we doing enough for the ripe while we remember the growing?

I appeal to you for whom those moving on have made room and your world better, larger, brighter, not to forget your benefactors. Institutions perpetuate the names of their donors. Many a man should perpetuate the name of some humble man who gave him more than money; many a church, the labors of him who has given his life to bless and build it for Christ.

THE CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE 1. There shall be a board of fourteen trustees who shall be called the trustees of the Ministers' and Widows' Charitable Fund, not less than seven of whom shall be ordained ministers of the gospel, and five shall constitute a quorum. Two of the trustees, viz., one minister and one layman, shall be chosen by the General Association.

ART. 2. The trustees shall meet annually and elect by ballot, from their own body, a president, secretary, treasurer, prudential committee, and two persons to audit the treasurer's accounts.

The president shall preside in all meetings of the board, and shall call special meetings whenever he judges it expedient or is requested to do it by any two members. In case of a vacancy in the presidency, the chairman of the prudential committee shall officiate as president till there shall be a new choice.

The secretary shall keep a record of all the proceedings of each board.

The treasurer shall have the care of the funds, give receipts for the moneys he receives, and shall make no disbursements without an order from the president, and shall give bonds in such sum as the trustees may direct, for the faithful discharge of his trust.

The prudential committee shall consist of three members, who shall choose their own chairman and clerk. This committee shall manage the concerns of the board under their direction, and at every meeting of the board shall make a report of their doings.

ART. 3. The trustees shall annually make a report to the General Association.

ART. 4. Vacancies in the board shall be filled by the remaining members by ballot, except of those elected by the General Association, which shall be filled at the next meeting of said association, after such vacancies may occur.

ART. 5. The board shall adopt such methods for collecting money and establishing a fund as they shall judge best calculated to secure the object. They may also make all necessary by-laws which shall not be repugnant to this constitution.

ART. 6. The beneficiaries of the fund shall be divided into two classes:

First, ordained ministers of the Congregational denomination who are or have been residents of New Hampshire and who have administered statedly at least three years to the churches of said denomination in the state, and shall be or have been connected with some one of the ministerial associations of the state and who from any cause shall be needy of charitable aid.

Secondly, the widows and children of such deceased ministers as before described.

ART. 7. All funds hereafter received from donations or legacies for the benefit of the first class, and all funds that have already accrued or may hereafter accrue for the benefit of the second class, shall be faithfully applied for the benefit of their respective classes, but in case of donations or legacies to the board without specification, the trustees shall appropriate them according to their discretion.

ART. 8. All ministers aforesaid desiring aid from this fund shall make application to the trustees in person, which application shall be certified by one or more persons acquainted with their circumstances, and all widows and children of deceased ministers aforesaid shall make application themselves to the trustees or by some clergyman or friend acquainted with their circumstances.

During the intervals of the meetings of the board, the prudential committee shall act upon all applications received and report their doings to the board.

ART. 9. Any trustee removing from the state without resigning shall be no longer a member, and any trustee failing to attend at least two years the meetings of the board, without giving a satisfactory excuse, shall be no longer a member; and the vacancies in either case shall be filled according to the provisions of the 4th article.

ART. 10. This constitution may be amended at any meeting of the board by a vote of the trustees, with the concurrence of the General Association.

Adopted July 18, 1866.

OFFICERS OF THE FUND MAY 17, 1899.

President.

CHARLES T. PAGE.

Secretary.

WILLIAM P. FISKE.

Treasurer.

EDWIN J. AIKEN.

Trustees.

LYMAN D. STEVENS,	Dea. JOHN C. THORNE,
WILLIAM P. FISKE,	Rev. CASSANDER C. SAMPSON,
CHARLES T. PAGE,	Rev. C. FREMONT ROPER,
HENRY MCFARLAND,	Rev. ALFRED L. HILLMAN,
Rev. NATHAN F. CARTER,	Dea. ALBERT H. DANIELS,
WILLIS D. THOMPSON,	Rev. EDWIN J. AIKEN,
Rev. GEORGE H. REED,	Rev. CYRUS RICHARDSON, D. D.

Prudential Committee.

CHARLES T. PAGE, Rev. EDWIN J. AIKEN,
HENRY MCFARLAND.

Auditors.

WILLIAM P. FISKE, WILLIS D. THOMPSON.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY FROM 1814 TO 1899.

NOTE. All officers elected before 1867 were officers of the Widows' Charitable Fund. Those in office at that time and those elected since 1867 were or are officers of the Ministers' and Widows' Charitable Fund.

Presidents.

Rev. William Morrison	1814–17
Rev. William F. Rowland	1817–29
Rev. Nathaniel Bouton, D. D.	1829–78
Rev. William R. Jewett	1878–81
Hon. Jonathan E. Sargent	1881–86
Hon. Lyman D. Stevens	1886–96
Charles T. Page	1896—

Secretaries.

Dea. Amos Tappan	1814–21
Samuel Fletcher, Esq.	1821–25
Rev. Jonathan French	1825–29
Rev. Abraham Burnham	1829–52
Hon. Samuel Morrill	1852–59
Dea. James Moulton, Jr.	1859–64
Hon. Joseph B. Walker	1864–66
Rev. William R. Jewett	1866–78
Dea. Asa McFarland	1878–79
Rev. Charles E. Harrington, D. D.	1879–82
Rufus P. Staniels	1882–90
William P. Fiske	1890—

Treasurers.

Dr. Thomas Sargent	1814–17
Dea. John Lane	1817–25
Dea. Stephen Ambrose	1825–42

Hon. Francis N. Fiske	1842–61
Shadrach Seavey	1861–79
John C. Thorne	1879–96
Rev. Edwin J. Aiken	1896——

Original Trustees.

Rev. Abijah Wines	
Rev. Jonathan French	——1859
Rev. Nathan Parker D. D.	
Dea. Amos Tappan	
John True, Esq.	
Rev. John Smith	
Rev. Asa McFarland, D. D.	——1825
Rev. William Morrison	
Dr. Thomas Sargent	
Rev. Walter Harris, D. D.	
Rev. William F. Rowland	
Rev. Ephraim T. Bradford	——1846

Trustees.

Samuel Fletcher, Esq.	——1825
Rev. John H. Church, D. D.	
Dea. Stephen Ambrose	——1825
Rev. Abraham Burnham	——1829
Rev. Nathaniel Bouton, D. D.	1825–29
Rev. Josiah Carpenter	——1839
Rev. Edwin Holt	
Rev. Jonathan Curtis	
Rev. Jonathan Ward	
Rev. Daniel J. Noyes, D. D.	1838–67
Rev. John M. Whiton	1841–57
Hon. Francis N. Fiske	1842–42
Hon. Samuel Morrill	1843–52
Rev. Abner B. Kelley	1843–66
Rev. Abner P. Tenney	1846–67
Rev. Samuel C. Bartlett, D. D.	1854–57
Rev. Lyman Whiting, D. D	1857–59

Rev. John Woods	1857
Rev. Josiah G. Davis, D. D.	1857–61
Dea. James Moulton, Jr.	1859–59
Rev. Ambrose Smith	1859–62
Dea. Asa McFarland	1859–78
Rev. John M. Putnam	1860–61
Rev. Wm. R. Jewett	1860–66
Shadrach Seavey	1860–61
Hon. Joseph B. Walker	1861–64; 1867–71
Rev. Ephraim O. Jameson	1861–63
Rev. Pliny B. Day, D. D.	1864–69
Rev. Henry E. Parker	1865–66
Rev. Lewis Goodrich	1865–67
Dr. Horace Webster	1865–67
Hon. Francis N. Fiske	1867–70
Rev. Benjamin P. Stone	1867–70
Rev. John K. Young, D. D.	1867–75
Hon. John W. Noyes	1867–96
Rev. Edward Buxton	1867–77
Rev. Arthur Little, D. D.	1867–69
Hon. Jonathan E. Sargent	1868–81
Rev. Cyrus W. Wallace, D. D.	1868–69
Rev. Franklin D. Ayer, D. D.	1869–99
Rev. Wm. J. Tucker, D. D.	1869–75
Rev. Henry E. Huntington	1870–76
Rev. Howard Moody	1871–75
Dea. Almon Harris	1871–76
Hon. Lyman D. Stevens	1871–86; 1896——
Rev. Hiram B. Putnam	1873–75
Rev. Moses T. Runnels	1874——
Rev. S. P. Leeds, D. D.	1875–78
Rev. S. L. Blake, D. D.	1875–78
Rev. Edward H. Greeley, D. D.	1877–90
Francis A. Fiske	1877–87
Rev. J. P. Newell	1877–79
Rev. Charles E. Harrington, D. D.	1878–79; 1886–90
Rev. J. W. Colwell	1878–81

Rev. C. E. Stone	1878–82
Rev. E. G. Selden, D. D.	1879–83
Dea. John C. Thorne	1879–79; 1896——
Rufus P. Staniels	1880–82
Rev. C. W. Wallace, D. D.	1881–90
Rev. C. C. Sampson	1882——
Rev. C. B. Strong	1883–85
Rev. W. H. Hubbard	1883–85
Dea. Albert S. Hammond	1883–91
Rev. Charles E. Milliken	1885–92
David E. Willard	1886–95
William P. Fiske	1887——
Rev. C. F. Roper	1890——
Rev. F. L. Allen	1890–96
Charles T. Page	1890——
Rev. A. T. Hillman	1891——
Henry McFarland	1891——
Dea. A. H. Daniels	1891——
Rev. N. F. Carter	1891——
Rev. E. J. Aiken	1893——
Willis D. Thompson	1895——
Rev. Cyrus Richardson, D. D.	1896——
Rev. George H. Reed	1899——

REPORT OF THE MINISTERS' AND WIDOWS' CHARITABLE FUND.

The annual meeting of the trustees of the Ministers' and Widows' Charitable Fund was held at Concord, May 17th, 1899.

There were present of the trustees Messrs. Page, Stevens, Thorne, McFarland, Daniels, Fiske, and Rev. Messrs. Roper Carter, Sampson, and Aiken.

The treasurer presented his report, showing that thirteen beneficiaries had been aided during the year, and the fund had increased $1,300. Two legacies have been received during the year, amounting to $700.

The treasurer's report was supplemented with the auditors' report, which was read, giving a detailed report of the treasurer's accounts.

Rev. Franklin D. Ayer, D. D., who had been a trustee since 1869, resigned, and the Rev. Geo. H. Reed was chosen to fill the vacancy. The trustees now are, Hon. Lyman D. Stevens, Charles T. Page, Henry McFarland, John C. Thorne, Albert H. Daniels, Willis D. Thompson, William P. Fiske, Rev. Nathan F. Carter, Rev. Cyrus Richardson, D. D., Rev. Cassander C. Sampson, Rev. C. Fremont Roper, Rev. Alfred T. Hillman, Rev. Edwin J. Aiken, Rev. Geo. H. Reed.

The following officers were chosen for the ensuing year:

President—CHARLES T. PAGE.

Secretary—WILLIAM P. FISKE.

Treasurer—REV. EDWIN J. AIKEN.

Prudential Committee—CHARLES T. PAGE, REV. EDWIN J. AIKEN, HENRY MCFARLAND.

Auditors—WILLIAM P. FISKE, WILLIS D. THOMPSON.

The prudential committee fix the sums that shall be given to each beneficiary during the year, and they were instructed to prepare some printed matter in regard to the work of this fund and its needs.

WILLIAM P. FISKE,
Secretary.

REPORT OF THE TREASURER OF THE MINISTERS' AND WIDOWS' CHARITABLE FUND.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE FUND FOR THE YEAR ENDING MAY 1, 1899.

From the churches:

Alstead, East	$9.50
Amherst	5.00
Atkinson	4.47
Barnstead Parade	3.40
Barnstead, South	2.10
Boscawen	5.00
Brentwood, East	4.00
Concord, First	17.27
Chester	7.25
Dunbarton	5.00
Durham	8.00
Exeter, First	10.00
Exeter, Phillips church	5.00
Gilmanton Iron Works	2.00
Gilsum	2.00
Greenfield	2.00
Greenland	10.75
Hanover, Dartmouth College church	38.95
Henniker	9.00
Hillsboro Center	2.50
Hinsdale	5.00
Hollis	5.35
Jaffrey	3.00
Keene, First	25.00
Lancaster, Mrs. Bridges	2.00
Lebanon, West	3.00
Lebanon, Y. P. S. C. E.	5.00
Lee, Missionary Circle	5.00

Marlboro	$3.75	
Manchester, Franklin-street church	36.96	
Meredith	9.00	
Milton	2.80	
Nashua, First	30.00	
Penacook	4.85	
Pittsfield	5.00	
Plymouth	20.30	
Portsmouth	14.56	
Rindge	5.00	
Stratham	3.00	
Tilton	12.75	
Walpole	12.76	
Wilmot	1.00	
Wilton	5.60	
General Association	38.13	
Merrimack Conference	5.00	
Sullivan Conference	23.75	
		$440.75

MISCELLANEOUS.

Estate of Justin S. Ambrose	$44.00	
Estate of Nancy Barr	500.00	
Estate of Dexter Richards	200.00	
Lyme, for National Ministerial Relief	17.51	
Check returned	62.50	
		$824.01
		$1,264.76

Number of beneficiaries aided last year, 15.
Amount paid beneficiaries during the year, $1,752.51.
Paid National Ministerial Relief fund, $17.51.

EDWIN J. AIKEN,
Treasurer.

AUDITORS' REPORT.

There were in the hands of the treasurer at the close of last year:

Bonds and stocks, etc.,	$36,751.50	
Real estate	2,500.00	
Deposits in Savings Banks	8,649.81	
Cash	100.25	
		$48,001.56

He has received during the year:

Interest from Merrimack County Savings Bank	$85.67	
Interest from New Hampshire Savings Bank	180.59	
Interest from New Hampshire Memorial Fund	3.73	
Amount received from churches	440.75	
Amount received from permanent fund	1,788.23	
Amount received from legacy of Nancy Barr	500.00	
Amount received from legacy of Dexter Richards	200.00	
Amount received balance of Justin S. Ambrose estate	44.00	
Amount received from check returned	62.50	
Amount received for National Ministerial Relief fund	17.51	
		$3,322.98
		$51,324.54

The treasurer has disbursed:

To beneficiaries	$1,735.00	
To salary of treasurer	100.00	
Printing	2.50	
Postage and revenue stamps	6.49	
Taxes on Western real estate	61.37	
Treasurer of National Ministerial Relief fund	17.51	
Expense account Hutton loan	23.93	
Miscellaneous	7.66	
		$1,954.46
		$49,370.08

The treasurer has in his possession:

Bonds amounting to	$9,010.00	
Stocks	7,819.50	
Notes	5,000.00	
Loans secured by real estate	7,200.00	
Debentures	4,800.00	
Miscellaneous	1,200.00	
Real estate	2,500.00	
Deposits in savings banks	11,706.57	
Cash on hand	94.01	
		$49,370.08

The Fund also has an undivided eighth in real estate in Denver, Col., received from the Knowles estate.

WILLIAM P. FISKE,
WILLIS D. THOMPSON,
Auditors.

Concord, N. H., May 13, 1899.

COPY OF APPLICATION BLANK.

MINISTERS.

1. What is your full name and address?.....

2. What is the date and place of your birth?.....

3. What is the date of your ordination?.....

4. What is the number of years of active service in the ministry?.....

5. What is your present church connection?.....

6. Of what Ministerial Association are you a member?.....

7. What churches have you served? (State the years of service given to each church.).....

8. Of what does your family consist, and how are you situated as regards a home?.....

9. What property have you, and what other means of support can you rely upon?.....

10. Have you relatives, or friends, on whom you can, and do, depend in part to supply your need?.....

11. What will be the probable amount of your income for the year for which aid is asked?.....

12. Are you in fair average health?.....

13. Do you receive aid from the National Ministerial Relief Fund or from other Ministerial Relief Societies?.....

.....19.....

Signed.....

References.....

COPY OF APPLICATION BLANK.

WIDOWS.

1. What is your full name and address?.....

2. What is the date and place of your birth?.....

3. What was your husband's full name?.....

4. What is the date of his ordination?.....

5. What churches did he serve, and state the number of years of service given to each church?.....

6. Of what Ministerial Association, and of what church, was he a member at the time of his death?.....

7. When and where did he die?.....

8. What is your present church connection?.....

9. Of what does your family consist, and how are you situated as regards a home?.....

10. What property have you?.....

11. What means of support can you rely upon, and state the probable amount of your income for the year for which aid is asked?.....

12. Have you relatives, or friends, on whom you can, and do, depend in part to supply your need?.....

13. Do you receive aid from the National Ministerial Relief Fund, or from other Ministerial Relief Societies?.....

.....19.....

Signed .....

References .....

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